

METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR DETECTING OBJECT PRESENCE AND ITS  
DURATION IN A GIVEN AREA

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system (10) for determining a presence, identity, and duration of presence in a given area of an object includes one or more mobile transmitters (12) that periodically send out a beacon signal. A node (14) includes a receiver (16) that receives a beacon signal whenever a mobile transmitter (12) is within a threshold range of the node (14). The node (14) includes a controller (18) that determines a signal strength of each received beacon signal. The controller (18) compares the signal strength of each received beacon signal to a reference signal strength associated with the threshold range in order to determine whether the mobile transmitter (12) was within the desired detection area of the node (14). A base unit (24) sorts received information packets for processing by a base computer (28) in order to determine what mobile transmitter (12) was at what node (14) and for how long.